FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Rootbound
Jeanne Emmons
New Rivers
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The cover art of *Rootbound*—a shadow-picture of flowers and leaves—fits the domestic, carefully crafted quality of Jeanne Emmon's first book of poems. This is meant descriptively, not dismissively. These are moving, exacting poems that emerge from what seems a fairly conventional, relatively privileged life in middle-class America. Emmons writes in an accessible, often narrative-driven style; strain and conflict tend to enter from the outside, mediated by television or news magazines. "The Bracelet" presents a famine victim from the cover of *Time*, and "Fence" describes a group of wallabies panicked into a fatal crush at the Omaha Zoo. These recognitions of "wild" reality as represented—and endangered—by culture add scope and weight to what might otherwise seem slightly precious evocations of childhood and gardens. In their best moments these poems pulse with a finely contained, understated eroticism and a beautiful generosity. "Mother's Dresser Drawer" begins with a memory of a child exploring her mother's dresser and ends with the speaker discovering her daughter at the same guilty pleasure: "There is a hidden scent you will never identify,/ that weighs down all those silly trinkets/ your small hands stir, your eyes study./ It is yours. I give it all to you,/ all the sunken treasures in the great sea,/ tumble upon tumble, brought to the surface for you,/ pouring brine, shining under the whole sky."